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12/06/2011 Minutes

VISION 2020 ENVIRONMENT TASK GROUP
 DECEMBER 6, 2011 MEETING (approved 1/3/2012)

SPY POND COMMITTEE
 Town Hall Annex, First Floor

In attendance: Brad Barber, Bill Eykamp, Jacob Friis, Joey Glushko, Jane Howard, Elizabeth Karpati, Harriet Noyes, Steve Ricci, Stroker Rogovin, Dick Terry. Guests: Nathaniel Stevens (Con Com), Christine Deshler and Grant Giblen (Fin Com), Teresa DeBenedictis (DPW), Judy Weinberg (Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park [MRP]), Brucie Moulton (Sustainable Arlington).

Facilitator: Jacob Friis Minutes: Elizabeth Karpati

Next meetings: 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 3, Feb. 7, March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5,
 Aug. 7?, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4. Town Hall Annex, first floor.

Funding for Waterbodies:

Judy reported that ACT (Aquatic Control Technologies) estimates that Hills Pond in MRP will need treatment costing \$2500-3000 next summer, plus a new aerator with buried cables; the present one from another company has exposed cables which were chewed by dogs. Maintenance on Hills Pond is privately funded; so is maintenance on the Arlington part of the Mystic Lakes, and the phragmites control project on Spy Pond.

At the Reservoir, water chestnuts were neglected for a few years so that in 2011 they needed intensive harvesting, costing \$20,000, and the same will be the case in 2012; thereafter annual maintenance costs should be lower. A ramp to avoid damage to the shore from the harvesting equipment will cost about \$15,000 – a capital item, but it may be too late to get it into the capital budget since it will already be needed in the summer of 2012. The Reservoir Committee recommends both a ramp and protective mats on the ground where the trucks removing the water chestnuts turn around. (DPW is also considering permeable pavement for the parking lot.)

Spy Pond weeds need chemical treatment every three or four years. This year the weed cover was increasing so that the next treatment may be needed in 2013 or already in 2012. Cost could run as high as \$40,000. The annual *average* for all waterbodies could be around \$40,000.

Since some maintenance is needed every year, it would seem logical to make it a line item in the DPW budget, but this poses timing problems. Res weeds need harvesting in the summer, but Spy Pond weeds need treatment in May or early June, at the end of the fiscal year, so that this need would have to be anticipated and the funds requested the previous spring. Money left in the operating budget at the end of a fiscal year cannot be held over for use in the next year, but money in the waterbodies fund *can* be held over. This suggests a two-pronged approach: give DPW a line item for routine yearly maintenance, and put some money in the waterbodies fund each year to be used by DPW for fluctuating additional expenses.

If all the maintenance money comes through a warrant article, the request to the 2012 Town Meeting should be for \$50,000. Added to money already in the waterbodies fund, this would cover the needs of both the Res (summer 2012) and Spy Pond (May 2013) in FY 2013. Future requests could be \$30,000, for lower ongoing needs at the Res and to accumulate funds for periodic treatments at Spy Pond. The request should be co-signed by the Con Com and the Reservoir, Spy Pond and Standing Committees.

Miscellany:

Swimming ban due to microcystis algae: Bill attended the Nov. 2 Board of Health meeting. The Board understands that there is an issue and plans to discuss it after January. We should attend that meeting or invite the Board to one of our meetings; Joey will ask them what they would prefer.

Bill got the state data used by the Board and found that there was only a one-day spike in the algae count. The state samples weekly, 10 ft. from Spy Pond Park, but algae do drift around. He will try to get the state to post the data where we can link to it. He is also writing an article on microcystis algae for the Friends of Spy Pond Park newsletter.

The topic of "reassessing priorities" was tabled.

Dick Terry distributed copies of the 2011 fertilizer flyer and asked for updates for 2012

The EcoFest will be held March 31, 2012, 10 am – 2 or 3 pm, in the Town Hall auditorium. The topic will be food. The Transition Town group will hold an associated potluck featuring Frances Moore Lappe. There is a display about EcoFest at the Library through December.

- The Arlington Land Trust meeting on January 25 will feature a speaker on Elizabeth Island: Eric Harrison, who spoke at the Spy Pond event last spring. [Subsequent correction: the speaker will be someone talking about the Mugar property.]

Stroker suggested trying to make the Spy Pond Committee "bigger and younger" with the help of young people like the high school "SAVE" group or the Arlington-Belmont crew. They could be invited to a meeting and asked to serve as authorities on modern communications media. Steve will contact Nigel Kraus, adviser to "SAVE."